

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 069678
ORIGIN ARA-10

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DRAFTED BY ARA/CEN:EHICKS

APPROVED BY ARA/CEN:MBOVA

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 069678

E.O. 11652: XGDS 1 AND 2

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PFOR, SHUM, ES, US

SUBJECT:CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR BERTRAND GALINDO

1. AT HIS REQUEST, ON MARCH 25, AMBASSADOR BERTRAND GALINDO MET WITH ARA/CEN TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF SOME CONCERN IN USG-GOES BILATERAL RELATIONS PRIOR TO HIS VISIT TO EL SALVADOR.

2. ESSENTIALLY, THE AMBASSADOR SOUGHT OUR VIEWS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RICHARDSON CASE TO THE USG, LIKELY CONSEQUENCES TO FLOW FROM CONTINUED DISSATISFACTION WITH GOES EXPLANATIONS AND UNITED STATES HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY VIS-A-VIS EL SALVADOR. WE EXPLAINED THAT THE USG CONCERNS ARE SHARED BY CONGRESS, THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THE AMERICAN PRESS AND THAT OUR HUMAN RIGHTS STANCE IS A WORLDWIDE POLICY ENCOMPASSING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH ALL NATIONS. WE ALSO NOTED THE COMPLEXITIES OF TRYING TO IMPLEMENT SUCH A POLICY WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES MAY CONSIDER AN INTRUSION INTO THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

3. ON THE RICHARDSON CASE WE STRESSED THAT AMBASSADOR
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LOZANO'S RECENT TRIP TO WASHINGTON WAS STRICTLY IN CONNECTION WITH THAT UNRESOLVED MATTER. WE LEFT OPEN THE QUESTION ABOUT FUTURE U.S. RESPONSES TO CONTINUED GOES UNSATISFACTORY EXPLANATIONS. (WE DID NOT REPEAT NOT MENTION

SPECIFIC ACTION, SUCH AS THAT AFFECTING THE MILGP.)

4. BERTRAND INQUIRED ABOUT A POSSIBLE TRIP BY PRESIDENT-ELECT ROMERO TO THE UNITED STATES IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WE DISCOURAGED THAT IDEA FOR THE NEAR TERM, AT LEAST, CITING INTER ALIA THE UNRESOLVED RICHARDSON MATTER, THE SUFFERING HUMAN RIGHTS IMAGE OF EL SALVADOR, THE AWKWARDNESS OF HIS PRESIDENT-ELECT STATUS, AND THE GENERAL UNTIMELINESS OF SUCH A TRIP AT THIS MOMENT. THE DISCUSSION THEN EVOLVED INTO BERTRAND'S IDEA THAT PERHAPS FOREIGN MINISTER MAURICIO BORGONOVA SHOULD VISIT SOON. OUR ANSWER WAS, PERHAPS SO. BORGONOVA MIGHT GET A GOOD FEELING OF THE ATMOSPHERICS IN WASHINGTON REGARDING RICHARDSON AND ALSO BE ABLE TO PLACE THE HUMAN RIGHTS MATTER VIS-A-VIS EL SALVADOR IN THE CONTEXT OF A GLOBAL POLICY AND WITH AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTERNAL WORKINGS OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT. IN PASSING, THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE FELT THE DELAY OF THE COUNTRY OFFICER'S TRIP TO EL SALVADOR IN MID-MARCH WAS AN INDICATION OF A VERY NEGATIVE FEELING ON THE PART OF THE USG ABOUT OUR CURRENT BILATERAL RELATIONS. WE QUICKLY ASSURED HIM THAT ONLY THE PRESS OF WORK HAD OBLIGED MISS HICKS TO ALTER HER PLANS AND THAT IN LATE APRIL SHE HOPES TO MAKE AN INITIAL TRIP TO THE COUNTRY.

5. BERTRAND SAID HE WOULD CONVEY THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE USG'S CONCERN OVER THE RICHARDSON CASE TO THE GOES, EXPLAIN THAT LOZANO CAME TO THE USG ONLY FOR THAT REASON AND TRY TO EXPLAIN THE COMPLICATIONS OF OUR USG HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT.

5. COMMENT: WE EMPHASIZED THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE AN CONFIDENTIAL

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INTEGRAL PART OF USG FOREIGN POLICY. WE REPEATEDLY UNDERSCORED THE IMPORTANCE OF A MATTER INVOLVING AN AMERICAN CITIZEN BELIEVED KILLED WHILE IN GOES CUSTODY. AT NO TIME DID WE EVEN HINT OF OUR INTENTIONS CONCERNING THE MILGP WHICH BY NOW, OF COURSE, HAVE BEEN CONVEYED TO THE GOES VERBALLY. JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE WE CALLED THE AP INTERVIEW TO BERTRAND'S ATTENTION SO THAT HE WOULD NOT FEEL WE HAD SPOKEN TO HIM IN BAD FAITH BY INDICATING TO HIM FRIDAY MORNING WE WERE NOT PLANNING TO MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT THE RICHARDSON CASE AT THIS JUNCTURE. WE EXPECT THAT THE LOZANO/BERTRAND LUNCHEON ON MARCH 30 WILL PIVOT UPON FUTURE USG ACTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH RICHARDSON MATTER.
CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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